

VZCZCXRO4277
RR RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM
DE RUCNDT #2053 3031815
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 301815Z OCT 06
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0591
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS

UNCLAS USUN NEW YORK 002053

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MTS, OES/IET, OES/ETC
AID FOR ANE/TS MELNYK

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [SENV](#) [TPHY](#) [TBIO](#) [KTIA](#) [ID](#) [SN](#) [UNGA](#)
SUBJECT: SINGAPORE PURPLE IN UN OVER INDONESIA
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZE

REF: JAKARTA 12731

11. (U) The perennial problem of South Asian haze fed by illegal timber clearing in Indonesia (reftel) spilled into normally docile UN Second Committee debates on October 25-26 during plenary discussions on sustainable development. Singapore devoted nearly the entirety of its October 25 statement to applauding President Yudhoyono's intentions to combat the scourge, but he lambasted Indonesian citizens' flouting of environmental laws. Singapore's pointed statement also condemned political factions in Indonesia who seek to hold action on the haze as a bargaining chip against other ASEAN states, seemingly ignorant of the fact that Indonesian citizens pay the highest price for the ecological disaster.

12. (U) Indonesia used its right of reply on October 26 to angrily catalogue the efforts Indonesia has undertaken to combat haze, to list its own grievances against Singapore (including harboring fugitive corrupt officials and offering no anti-haze assistance), and to condemn Singapore for interfering in Indonesia's domestic affairs and airing this dirty laundry outside of bilateral or ASEAN channels. Singapore used its own right of reply, in far calmer fashion, to compliment Indonesia's efforts and stated intentions, while also noting Singapore and other neighbors' great frustration that a decade of dialogue on the problem has produced so little result.

13. (SBU) Comment: Reverting to the right of reply is rather infrequent in the pacific-minded UN Second Committee, and usually focuses on thematic issues rather than on specific countries. Georgia-Russian sparring over the latter's punitive expulsion of guest workers was a recent exception, hopefully not signaling a new trend. Singapore delegate told USUN Econoff that his delegation gave Indonesia fair warning over the statement, providing them an advance copy. He claimed Singapore faced the prospect of Indonesian indignation with equanimity.
BOLTON